



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
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Date: 02/01/2019
Time: 02:45 PM
Location: 229
Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0078 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to contract with a firm that specializes in school finance to study the adequacy of education in Hawaii. Appropriates moneys for the study.

Department's Position:

The Department very much supports the intent of SB78, but has concerns that in its current form would impose an extensive and specific scope of work for the adequacy study, with inadequate time or funding to complete.

This measure would:

1. require the Department to contract with a consulting firm that specializes in school finance and studies of public education systems in multiple states, to perform a study on the adequacy of funding for education in Hawaii;
2. appropriate \$200,000 to the Department to contract the study effective July 1, 2019; and
3. establish a due date for a report on the findings and recommendation of the study no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2020 (less than six months after effective date of the measure).

The Department shares the concerns raised in Section 1 that include recognition that:

1. the Department's funding may be lagging in comparison to districts of similar size and cost of living;
2. underfunding public schools undermines the State's goal of providing a quality education for all of Hawaii's children; and
3. insufficient funding results in larger class sizes, a lack of adequate classroom supplies, elimination of arts and career and technical education courses, limits special education and English language learner programs, less empowerment on site based decisions, and contributes to challenges in recruiting and retaining quality teachers and staff.

The Department has the following suggestions:

1. Section 2. (b)(1) to (5) - consider shifting the detailed requirements for the adequacy study

contained into the Committee Report, where they can be viewed as desirable components of the adequacy study, but not mandates that may preclude contractors from submitting proposals;

2. Section 2. (c) - consider shifting the due date from 20 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2020, to the regular session of 2021, to allow for the work required to follow procurement laws to select a contractor to perform the work, the contractor to conduct the research and engage with stakeholders, the contractor to draft a report, and the Department to review and accept the work; and
3. Section 3. - consider increasing the appropriation for the study to \$500,000, given that estimates shared with the last Committee on Weights by education researchers in the field for the cost of adequacy studies in other jurisdictions ranged from \$250,000 to \$1 million.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 78 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 78 with a suggested amendment**, relating to education. Due to the length of time that it would take to conduct an Adequacy Study using the Evidence-Based method that includes case studies for rich data that lawmakers would find useful, we suggest the study be complete for the legislature prior to the 2021 legislative session, instead of the 2020 legislative session as written in the current language of this bill.

In recent years, state legislatures, state education departments and advocacy groups in more than 30 states have sponsored education adequacy studies to objectively determine the funding levels needed to educate all children to high standards. These professional studies have introduced transparency and rigor to a previously opaque and often arbitrary process.

Providing lawmakers with the very best, most accurate and most reliable data is an imperative first step to help them plan for funding allocations that will concentrate efforts to improve the quality of education our students deserve.

Supporting a school funding adequacy study using the Evidence-Based Method will determine what it will truly cost to educate all public school students in Hawai'i, regardless of income, location, learning challenges or other circumstances.

Adequacy studies are rigorously being used to lay the groundwork for long-term, meaningful school improvement by determining where resources should be allocated, based on the best educational research, that will help all students achieve and succeed, whether that means college, technical training, apprenticeships or jobs right after graduation. An adequacy study will help determine the true cost of providing a high-quality education to all of our children in Hawaii in our public schools.

An adequacy study would take into consideration what is needed at a school based on poverty, districts of varying sizes, types of schools (elementary, middle, high school), plus the size of the school, and whether it is in a geographically isolated district such as Lanai and Hana. It will also consider what resources, including certified teachers and support staff, are needed, to help focus on all students including those with special needs, English Language Learners, and at-risk students. The study will provide lawmakers with the foundation for any potential school funding allocations to get the most bang for the buck, so to speak. It has worked for other states, such as Washington, recently, and it is time for Hawaii to take a closer look at our funding for our public schools, especially when it comes to resource allocations.

Accordingly, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.